

PRESS RELEASE

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Sussex Academy Hosts Derby Day 2016

(Georgetown, DE) Sussex Academy, Sussex County's only public charter, tuition-free school, is hosting Derby Day on Saturday, May 7, 2016 from 4:00pm to 7:30pm at Lavender Fields in Milton.

Honorary Chairs Chris and Chanell Dagesse will welcome over 200 guests dressed in their "derby best" for an afternoon of fine food, high style and the "most exciting two minutes in sports."

Lavender Fields in Milton will be transformed by Coastal Tented Events into a grand tented Kentucky Derby themed party catered by Nage with mint juleps, Dogfish Head Craft Brewed Ales, wine, Kentucky burgoo, oysters, and bourbon glazed ribs. Jay Diaz, Print Coast2Coast, will serve as master of Ceremonies and guests will enjoy music by The High and Wides, live and silent auctions; and, of course, live broadcast of the race! Attendees can also participate in a race raffle and compete for "Dandiest Derby Hat." Proceeds from this year's event will be used to help build the Sussex Academy Middle School Wing.

The Derby Day Triple Crown Diamond Sponsors are Beacon Pediatrics and The Lewes Building Company. The event's Triple Crown Gold Sponsor is Dr. Roman Orsini of Orthopaedic Associates of Southern Delaware. Crooked Hammock, Lewes, DE, also an event sponsor, is hosting a pre-party reception reserved for all of the event sponsors. Following the pre-party, Sponsors and their guests will be transported to and from Lavender Fields courtesy of Jolly Trolley.

Sussex Academy recently received the 2015 Reward School Award for being the Top Performing School in Delaware. The school opened its doors for grades 6 to 8 in fall 2000. In 2012 the Delaware Department of Education approved a major charter modification to add grades 9 to 12. The first 9th grade class was enrolled in 2013, and a high school grade level has been added each subsequent year. The high school will be completed in fall 2016 as the first graduating class begins their senior year.

In order to accommodate the additional students, the Sussex Academy Foundation acquired and completed interior construction of an existing building located at 21150 Airport Road in Georgetown, Delaware. This construction, which included administrative offices, classrooms, locker rooms, additional restrooms, a library, cafeteria, and a performing arts stage, was completed in the fall of 2015.

Currently, the Sussex Academy Foundation is in Phase II of its capital campaign to raise funds to complete the middle school wing, pictured on the following page. Construction started in January 2016 and, when complete, this 30,000 square foot wing will have 12 classrooms, 3 science labs, offices, and a multipurpose room. The multipurpose room will be used for the middle school physical education classes, team expedition showcases, middle school class meetings, and athletic activities such as middle school basketball games and practices as well as high school volleyball games and practices as needed.

Although it is a public charter school, Sussex Academy, like all charter schools, does not receive funding for capital expenses. All funding for the acquisition and construction of the new school has been raised from foundations, businesses, private donors and fundraising events. The school does receive public funding for operational expenses; however, those funds are for operating expenses only and may not be used for capital improvements. Other public schools may be built, renovated or added within a district with passage of a public supported referendum and paid for by taxes; Sussex Academy must raise these funds independently and without taxpayer support. To learn more about Sussex Academy please visit www.sussexacademy.org or contact Gina Derrickson at 302-856-3636/gina.derrickson@saas.k12.de.us

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